

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 03900 221352Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 TRSE-00 MCT-01  
/081 W

-----042067 221609Z /47

R 221307Z JUN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3601  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
DIA WASHDC  
SECDEF WASHDC  
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 3900

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS, ELAB, SY  
SUBJECT: INDUSTRIAL UNREST CONTINUES IN DAMASCUS: BAATHI ACTI-  
VISTS FROM HAMA JAILED

REF: DAMASCUS 3408

1. REFTEL REPORTED THAT WORKERS AT LARGE TEXTILE FACTORY  
IN DAMASCUS SUBURB OF QABUN HAD SUBMITTED PETITION TO SARG  
PROTESTING LACK OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO ALLEVIATE WORSENING  
ECONOMIC SITUATION. RECENTLY, DAMASCUS PRESS REPORTED FIRE  
OCCURRED IN THIS FACTORY ON JUNE 15. ON JUNE 21, BRITISH EMBOFF  
TOLD US THAT A UK ENGINEER HAD BEEN VISITING KHUMASIYYAH FACTORY  
WHEN OIL TANK EXPLODED. FEW MINUTES LATER, THERE WAS SECOND  
EXPLOSION IN ANOTHER BUILDING IN FACTORY COMPLEX. ACCORDING  
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TO EMBOFF, UK ENGINEER TERMED EXPLOSIONS CLEAR CASE OF  
SABOTAGE. COINCIDENTALLY, ENGINEER ALSO VISITED CEMENT  
FACTORY IN DUMMAR, JUST OUTSIDE DAMASCUS ON BEIRUT ROAD,  
AND NOTICED SOME LEAKS IN CHEMICAL STORAGE TANKS THAT IN  
HIS OPINION INDICATED SABOTAGE.

2. EMBOFF ADDED THAT THEIR EMBASSY HAD PICKED UP FROM

SEVERAL SOURCES INFORMATION THAT WORKERS AT NUMBER OF  
GOVERNMENT-OWNED FACTORIES WERE ENGAGED IN WORK SLOWDOWNS.

3. EMBOFF THEN DREW OUR ATTENTION TO RECENT ARTICLE IN  
AL-BAATH WHICH REPORTED HAMA  
LABOR SYNDICATE LEADERS HAD  
COMPLETED 9-DAY FACT-FINDING TOUR OF HAMA PROVINCE TO  
DISCUSS WORKER'S CONDITIONS WITH MEMBERS OF SYNDICATE. IN  
HIS OPINION, THIS INDICATED REGIME WAS MAKING SOME EFFORT  
TO IDENTIFY WORKER GRIEVANCES AND DEMONSTRATE TO WORKERS  
THAT LABOR HIERARCHY WAS CONCERNED WITH THEIR PROBLEMS.

4. EMBOFF CONCLUDED, HOWEVER, BY NOTING THAT HAMA CONTINUED  
AS PROBLEM AREA FOR SARG. THEIR EMBASSY HAD LEARNED FROM  
A JOURNALIST WORKING FOR AL-THAWRAH THAT 30 BAATH PARTY  
ACTIVISTS FROM PARTY'S HAMA BRANCH HAD RECENTLY BEEN  
DETAINED IN MEZZE PRISON FOR CRITICIZING REGIME.

5. COMMENT: LABOR UNREST APPEARS TO BE CONTINUING IN  
ABSENCE OF SARG MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE CAUSES OF WORKER  
COMPLAINTS, INCLUDING OFFICIAL CORRUPTION AND INABILITY OF  
WORKERS WAGES IN PUBLIC SECTOR TO KEEP PACE WITH RISING  
COST OF LIVING. DETENTION OF BAATHISTS FROM HAMA INDICATES  
THAT TRADITIONAL TENSIONS BETWEEN THAT CITY AND REGIME  
REMAIN ACUTE.

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DETENTION, INDUSTRIAL PLANTS, EXPLOSIONS, LABOR DISPUTES, DISSIDENT FACTIONS  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Reference:** 77 DAMASCUS 3408  
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**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** PINS, ELAB, SY  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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